

REMARKS

Claims 8-13 are currently pending in the Application. Claim 8 is amended with this response. Applicant respectfully thanks the Examiner for indicating the allowable subject matter of claim 13.

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102(b)

The Examiner rejects claims 8-10 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) for allegedly being anticipated by United States Patent Number 3,711,062 to Kirkwood ("Kirkwood" hereinafter). Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant's claim 8 recites *inter alia*:

"wherein each one of the sealing elements includes a pneumatic circumferential watertight chamber entirely filled with air."

Kirkwood does not teach the sealing elements to be pneumatic, circumferential, and watertight chambers entirely filled with air. Instead, Kirkwood teaches expandable tubing 34 that is receptive to pressure from, and in fluid communication with, hydraulic tubes 48 and 50 that extend from a hydraulic pump 54 (please see Column 4, lines 22-30, and Figures 2, 3, 6, and 7). This tubing 34 is the expandable chamber of the gasket members 32, which the Examiner equates with the two sealing elements recited in applicant's claim 8. Thus, as Kirkwood teaches a chamber of the sealing elements 32 to be hydraulic pressurized, it does not teach a chamber that is pneumatic, watertight, and entirely filled with air. Therefore, Applicant respectfully submits that Kirkwood does not teach every element of claim 8.

Furthermore, Applicant respectfully points out that claim 8 has been amended to recite *inter alia*:

“said two sealing elements being configured for use in the guillotine valve.”

Kirkwood does not teach a guillotine valve. Guillotine valves work by the principle of dislocating a closing blade traversing the valve body, thus closing a fluid passage through the same. Instead of teaching an analogous guillotine blade, Kirkwood teaches obstruction elements that are essentially blocks that present a circular opening in a stretch of their wall.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth hereinabove, Applicant respectfully submits that Claim 8, and claims 9 and 10 that depend therefrom, are not anticipated by Kirkwood.

It is respectfully noted that the anterior valves of Kirkwood require a considerable air-gap displacement between the open and close points against the nominal diameter of the opening of the valve. It is likely that both of these valves would have a considerable air-gap displacement, with a size that does not correspond to the doubling of the air-gap displacement with regards to Applicant's valve, in relation to the respective diameters. This is because the block at the anterior valves may be moved when the valve opens, sufficiently exposing the opening of the block, which on its total operation, requests a huge displacement. On the contrary, Applicant teaches a necessary displacement (for a total opening of the valve) that is smaller, and corresponds to a little bit more than the measure of the diameter of the gate valve.

Claim rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner rejects claim 11 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Kirkwood in view of United States Patent Number 3,333,816 to Williams.

Since claim 11 depends from claim 8, for at least the reasons set forth in Applicant's Remarks pertaining to the 102 rejections, Kirkwood does not teach every element of Applicant's claim 11. As Williams does not remedy the addressed deficiencies of Kirkwood, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 is not obvious over the proposed combination of Kirkwood and Williams.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Williams does not teach a flexible "T." In Williams, the two elements that form the "T" are joined by weld, gluing, etc. whereas the insert exemplary to Applicant's disclosure is composed by two discharged pieces that allows flexibility of the sealing elements, such that they may move under the blade.

The non-flexible relationship of the Williams "T" is taught at column 3, lines 24-30, which discloses, "Figure 4 best shows the specific construction of a seat member. There it is apparent that a rigid reinforcing member is embedded within the body 61 and bead 63 of the seat member. The reinforcing element is of annular form and comprises a flat annular member 101 and a ring member 103, *permanently* secured together in coaxial relationship. The Williams member 103 has a diameter slightly greater than the internal ring of the annular member 101 and is secured to one side face of the annular member 101." Therefore, the teaching of Williams discloses a permanently secured "T" instead of the apart and independent portions claimed by Applicant.

The Examiner also rejects claim 12 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being allegedly unpatentable over Kirkwood in view of United States Patent Number 3,367,625 to Fortune.

As with claim 11, since claim 12 depends from claim 8, for at least the reasons set forth in Applicant's Remarks pertaining to the 102 rejections, Clarkson does not teach every element of Applicant's claim 12. As Fortune does not remedy the addressed deficiencies of Kirkwood, Applicant respectfully submits that claim 12 is not obvious over the proposed combination of Kirkwood and Fortune.

Furthermore, referring to Figure 3 of Fortune, where the disclosed sealing element may be made by steel, bronze or inflexible plastic, and is the guide and sealing element of the guillotine. Applicant's valve may include a guide ring that is fitted in the body of the valve and can be easily replaced (i.e., it is interchangeable). This guide is not the sealing element. The sealings are made by the molded in elastomer, and are maintained in permanent contact among themselves when the guillotine is closed. Thus, the sealing and guide functions are made by different pieces in the valve of Fortune than they are in Applicant's disclosure.

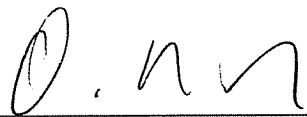
Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection are herein overcome by way of the above amendments and remarks. Allowance of the claims is respectfully requested.

Applicant hereby petitions under 37 C.F.R. §§1.136, 1.137 for any extension of time necessary for entry and consideration of the present Response.

If there are any charges with respect to this amendment, or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicant's attorneys.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorneys at the below telephone number regarding this Response or otherwise concerning the present application.

Respectfully submitted,
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